

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims presented below replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

1-45. (cancelled)

46-62. (cancelled)

63. (previously presented) An apparatus for assisting a user in determining a level of acceptability of an event occurring, the apparatus comprising:

input means for receiving a likelihood value which represents a likelihood that the event will occur, and a confidence value which represents a level of confidence that the user has in the likelihood value;

storage means for storing a plurality of records each of which includes an indicator representing a level of acceptability of the event occurring, a range of likelihood values, and a range of confidence values;

identify means for identifying one of the records in the storage means, the one of the records being identified by processing the likelihood value and the confidence value received by the input means, and each of the records stored in the storage means; and

output means for outputting the indicator of the one of the records identified by the identifying means.

64. (currently amended) The apparatus as claimed in claim 63, wherein the range of confidence values of the record identified by the identify means ~~comprises~~ includes a match to the confidence value received by the input means, and the range of likelihood values of the record identified by the identify means either includes the likelihood value received by the input means or is numerically closer to the likelihood value received by the input means than the range of likelihood values of any other of the records for which the range of confidence values include the confidence value received by the input means.

65. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 64, wherein the indicator in each of the records is a visual indicator each being a different colour or symbol.

66. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 65, wherein the range of likelihood values in each of the records comprises a range of probability values.

67. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 66, wherein the range of confidence values in each of the records comprises a range of integers.

68. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 67, wherein the input means is configured to allow the user to enter and/or change the range of likelihood values and/or range of confidence values in each of the records.

69. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 68, wherein the input means comprises a graphical user interface.

70. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 69, wherein the storage means comprises a computer storage medium.

71. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 70, wherein the computer storage medium comprises a database.

72. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 71, wherein the identify means comprises a suitably configured computer.

73. (previously presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 72, wherein the output means comprises a graphical user interface.

74. (previously presented) A method for assisting a user in determining a level of acceptability of an event occurring, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a likelihood value which represents a likelihood that the event will occur, and a confidence value which represents a level of confidence that the user

has in the likelihood value;

storing a plurality of records each of which includes an indicator representing a level of acceptability of the event occurring, a range of likelihood values, and a range of confidence values;

identifying one of the records stored by the storing step, the one of the records being identified by processing the likelihood value and the confidence value received by the receiving step, and each of the records stored by the storing step; and

outputting the indicator of the one of the records identified by the identifying step.

75. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 74, wherein the range of confidence values of the record identified by the identifying step ~~comprises~~ includes the confidence value received by the receiving step, and the range of likelihood values of the record identified by the identifying step either includes the likelihood value received by the input means or is numerically closer to the likelihood value received by the receiving step than the range of likelihood values of any other of the records for which the range of confidence values include the confidence value received by the input means.

76. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 75, further comprising the step of entering and/or changing the range of likelihood values and/or range of confidence values in each of the records.

77. (currently amended) An apparatus for determining a level of confidence in a risk assessment, the apparatus comprising:

obtaining means operable to obtain a weighting that is associated with at least one of a plurality of factors that can influence a reliability of the risk assessment; and

comparing means operable to compare the weighting to a range of weightings which are associated with the factors in order to determine the level of confidence in the risk assessment;

wherein the obtaining means is such that it uses the at least one of the factors to retrieve the weighting from a record of the weightings and is operable to retrieve the weighting from the record by using a first index and a second index to retrieve the weighting from the record, wherein the first index corresponds to a first of the at least

one of the factors, and the second index corresponds to a second and a third of the at least one of the factors;

and wherein the first of the at least one of the factors relates to an environmental parameter associated with the risk assessment, the second of the at least one of the factors relates to an amount of work performed to determine the risk assessment, and the third of the at least one of the factors relates to a level of acceptance associated with the amount of work performed and a technique used to perform the work.

78 – 80. (cancelled)

81. (currently amended) The apparatus as claimed in claim [[80]] 77 wherein the record comprises a matrix that contains an entry for each of the weightings, and the first index and the second index correspond to an x, y coordinate for the entry.

82. (currently amended) A method of determining a level of confidence in a risk assessment, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a weighting that is associated with at least one of a plurality of factors that can influence a reliability of the risk assessment; and

comparing the weighting to a range of weightings which are associated with the factors in order to determine the level of confidence in the risk assessment;

wherein the step of obtaining the weighting comprises using the at least one of the factors to retrieve the weighting from a record of the weightings;

wherein the step of using the at least one of the factors to retrieve the weighting comprises the step of using a first index and a second index to retrieve the weighting from the record;

wherein the first index corresponds to a first of the at least one of the factors, and the second index corresponds to a second and a third of the at least one of the factors;

and wherein the first of the at least one of the factors relates to an environmental parameter associated with the risk assessment, the second of the at least one of the factors relates to an amount of work performed to determine the risk assessment, and the third of the at least one of the factors relates to a level of acceptance

associated with the amount of work performed and a technique used to perform the work.

83 –85. (cancelled)

86. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim [[85]] 82, wherein the record comprises a matrix that contains an entry for each of the weightings, and the first index and the second index correspond to an x, y coordinate for the entry.

87. (new) An apparatus for assisting a user in determining the level of confidence in a risk assessment, the apparatus comprising:

input means for receiving multiple factors upon which a risk is to be assessed;

storage means for storing the factors, and a set of weighting indicators therefor;

said multiple factors being:

first factors which rate the environment context of the risk assessment;

second factors based on the extent of work performed to derive the risk assessment;

third factors which rate a level of acceptance of the extent of the work performed to derive the risk assessment;

processing means for:

processing the second and third factors to identify each possible combination of the second and third factors;

processing each identified combination of second and third factors, with first factors, to identify each possible combination of second and third factors, with first factors;

processing each possible combination of second and third factors, with first factors, to establish a weighting index for each possible combination of second and third factors, with first factors,

each weighting index representing a level of confidence in a risk assessment;

and output means for outputting a spread range of the set of weighting indexes, and the particular risk assessment corresponding to a combination of the factors used to establish the weighting index, whereby a confidence in the risk assessment is determinable by the relative position of the weighting index in the spread range of

the indexes outputted.

88. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 87, wherein the established weighting indexes are entries in a matrix of the possible combination of second and third factors, with first factors, and wherein second and third factors and first factors provide an index to the matrix.

89. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 88, wherein the index to the entries in the matrix are divided into sub-factors.

90. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 89, wherein sub-factors for the first factors are selected from: simple; low moderate; moderate; high moderate; and complex.

91. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 89, wherein the sub-factors for the second factors are selected from: basic; moderate; and extensive.

92. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 89, wherein the sub-factors for the third factors are selected from: a single view; a small group; a large group; and widely accepted.

93. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 90, wherein the input means allows a user to enter and/or change the factors and the weighting indicators.

94. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 91, wherein the input means allows a user to enter and/or change the factors and the weighting indicators.

95. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 90, wherein input means allows the user to specify the spread range of the set of the weighting indexes.

96. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 91, wherein the input means allows the user to specify the spread range of the set of the weighting indexes.

97. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 92, wherein the input means allows the user to specify the spread range of the set of the weighting indexes.

98. (new) A method of assisting a user in determining a level of confidence in a risk assessment, comprising:

entering into input means multiple factors upon which a risk is to be assessed;

storing the factors and a set of weighting indicators therefore;

said multiple factors being:

first factors which rate the environment context of the risk assessment;

second factors which based on the extent of work performed to derive the risk assessment;

third factors which rate the level of acceptance of the extent of the work performed to derive the risk assessment;

process second and third factors and identifying each possible combination of second and third factors,

identifying each possible combination of second and third factors with first factors,

establishing a weighting index for each identified possible combination of second and third with first factors, wherein each weighting index represents a level of confidence in a risk assessment within the set of weighting indicators, and determining a level of confidence by selecting factors which match a risk assessment, and noting the weighting index therefore and its relative position within the set of weighting indexes.

99. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 98, wherein a matrix of entries is established of the weighting indexes, and wherein second and third factors, and first factors provide an index to the matrix.

100. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 99, wherein the entries in the matrix are divided in sub-factors.

101. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 100, wherein sub-factors for the first factors are selected from: simple; low; moderate; high moderate; and complex.

102. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 100, wherein sub-factors for the second factors are selected from: basic, moderate, and extensive.

103. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 100, wherein sub-factors for the third factors are selected from: a single view; a small group; a large group; and widely accepted.

104. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 98, wherein a user changes the factors, and/or the weighting indicators.

105. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 98 wherein a user specifies a spread range of the set of weighting indicators.